

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE  
Transcriber's Office  
FLOOR DEBATE

March 20, 2002 LB 1309

record that he pointed out that he nor the other gentleman, whose name I don't pronounce at this time, had anything to do with the editorial. He said he will write a column and it may be picked up by any of these Catholic papers, but he has nothing to do with writing the editorials or establishing the policy. I think I've been as clear and forthright in that as I can. Now, for Senator Foley's sake, before he runs back to Bruskewitz and ask him, should he stand up and tell me to say ten or twelve "Hail Marys" as a penance and then Bruskewitz will say, oh, that only works for you all; that doesn't work on the heathens or the "sheathens", that's just you all. This comes from the Omaha World-Herald, August 30, 1998. This is from the World-Herald: When Elden Curtiss was bishop of the diocese of Helena in western Montana in 1989, a former parishioner accused the Reverend Wilson Smart of sexual abuse more than a decade earlier. Smart eventually admitted molesting more than 30 boys from 1957 to 1978. In the Reverend Daniel Herek's case, incidents of abuse allegedly started before Curtiss was archbishop and continued during his tenure, in Omaha that is. In Smart's case, the abuse began long before Curtiss was bishop, but came to light on his watch. Curtiss was criticized for his handling of the scandal and apologized for his mistakes. In a letter to the people of the Helena diocese on April 14, 1993, Curtiss said he examined the file on Smart after the initial accuser came forward in 1989. Smart's attraction to boys was known to the diocese in 1959 and he was sent away for counseling, Curtiss wrote. For reasons that were unclear, Curtiss said, quote, Father Smart was allowed to return to regular parish ministry, apparently without any safeguards in place, unquote. Then we continue with the full text. Omaha Archbishop Elden Curtiss has had experience in the difficult area of dealing with a priest accused of child molestation.

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: When Curtiss was bishop of the diocese of Helena in western Montana in 1989, a former parishioner accused him, this Reverend Wilson Smart, of sexual abuse more than a decade earlier. Smart eventually admitted molesting more than 30 boys from 1957 to 1978. When Curtiss...oh, in the Reverend Daniel Herek's case, the incidence of abuse started before